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BRITTANY AND THE BRETONS.

BRITTANY, the ancient Armorica, is a curiously attractive country to the leisurely tourist, though it might seem difficult to account for the fact. Its scenery is certainly not bold or grand, or in any great degree striking. It is everywhere low, with vast heaths, thinly populated; while the interior of the province is broken up by hills, and narrow valleys through which run streams which are only partly navigable; and yet there is an attraction about it. The cause for this must be in the associations awakened by the old castles perched on hillocks which become mountains there—and forests, suggesting Druidical rites, which are everywhere to be seen. The people, too, are as queer as their country, and have quite as great an air of antiquity, for which a reason may be sought in their origin and history. It was about the third century that the ancient Britons began emigrating from Great Britain to Armorica, as it was then called; but in the fifth century so many of them thus emigrated, to escape from the invading Anglo-Saxons, that they formed the bulk of the population, and gave the name of Brittany to the province. The tenacity of their race shows itself to this day in the Breton peasants, in their dress, manners and customs, and especially in their language, which is not French, but a patois so nearly resembling the Celtic that Celtic-speaking Welshmen find little difficulty in conversing with them; indeed, they show more traces now of this British emigration than do the English peasants of the Norman Conquest. There is a curious contrast between the two neighboring provinces of Brittany and Normandy in their history. Normandy conquered England, was in turn conquered by her, and for centuries was alternately held as an appanage of the French or English crown. Brittany, on the other hand, maintained its independence, though rudely assailed, and made the theatre of long and bloody wars until the early part of the sixteenth century, when it became finally incorporated with France, but on terms which carried no dishonor with them. It is probably to this sturdy independence of the inhabitants, and the wars it necessarily brought on them, that we owe the numerous castles which dot the country from one end to the other, and no more characteristic and fitting illustration of Breton scenery could have been chosen than the one we present.

An old feudal castle, its square towers and massive walls rising from the surrounding foliage and overlooking the country as it has done for centuries, for at the latest it dates back to medieval times, before the plain, massive features of the Roman architecture had been covered over and obliterated by the greater orna-

mentation of what we now recognize as the Gothic or Norman style. Perhaps some of the stones in its walls may even have been placed in position by the all-conquering Romans themselves. At any rate it has stood long enough to have looked on generations of mailed warriors and gentle maidens; to have witnessed more than one change of dynasty and even of language among those surrounding or seeking shelter within its walls; to have had arrows from long-bow and cross-bow, stones from catapults and bullets from arquebuses and culverins, perhaps from rifles and cannons, rattle



MOUNT JARDIN.

against its walls; and to have undergone more than one change of flag and of master.

Nor would the scene have been complete without the wide-trousered peasant fishing in the moat, from which scaly beauties have been drawn for centuries—long ago for fat monks—great fishermen always—for the knights and ladies at the castle to feast themselves withal, and in later years for the peasantry themselves as well as for the lords of the manor. In the feudal times our peasant, instead of fishing himself, would have been employed in beating the sedges at the banks to keep the bullfrogs quiet, so his betters might not be disturbed by their croaking. Who knows but some ancestor of our fisherman was so employed where he now wields the rod?

OUR CENTENNIAL HOME-COMING.

SEVERAL months ago, when the Centennial gathering at Philadelphia was as yet a thing of contemplation and only partially of arrangement, we took occasion, in dealing with some of the reasons why we should not overestimate the omens or the glories of the occasion, to designate the festival as "Our Tin Wedding"—something evidencing the pride of the parties and the attachment of friends, but by no means proving that the couple linked in marriage had done anything to deserve a very extensive recognition of their position. That, for that time: now that the celebration is an assured one, and that the month is upon us which is to see the opening of the Centennial Exhibition, let us very materially change the figure and deal with the great event as something very different, much more important, and in the main much more honorable.

For the purposes of this brief article, let the gathering at Philadelphia, of the peoples and the products of all lands, in honor of the one hundredth year of American liberty, be called by that humble but honored old name which was used so often and so lovingly by our fathers and our grandfathers—that of a "home-coming," or, as it was alternately called in some of the Eastern States, and no doubt still is so, if the good old institution is retained—a "home-bringing." It has both meanings: that of the husband "bringing" home his bride, to the place where, at least for the time, she is to make her abode; that of the young wife "coming" to that spot which is to witness so much of happiness and the fulfillment of so noble a mission, if God's providence allows and the parties nearest concerned do their duty faithfully and lovingly—that which is almost sure to witness a corresponding amount of trial and very likely to be further sanctified by suffering. Let us consider America, after his brief bridal-trip, bringing home

his bride, Liberty, and calling all the world to come and sit down at the feast of congratulation.

So considering, we can but recognize that he is a lusty and a noble fellow—this bridegroom just returned from his brief bridal-trip of an hundred years and about to apply himself to the permanent duties of life. Of no ordinary stature is he—with his head among the snow-clouds of the northern mountains and his feet feeling the warm lapping of the southern sea: with one of his hands beckoning from the Atlantic coast to far-off Europe, and the other signaling in like manner to still farther Asia, from the Golden Gate, over the broad Pacific. It is a little out of the common order of the bridal-trip and the home-coming, perhaps, to say so much, but there are already